

GLOBAL CONNECTIONS AND EXCHANGE - UZBEKISTAN

PROGRAM NEWS



AUGUST 2005

Global Connections and Exchange is funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State and administered by IREX



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TECH AGE GIRLS BRING INNOVATION TO THEIR COMMUNITIES

"Tech Age Girls" has been an enormously successful project within the Global Connections and Exchange program, aimed at developing future women leaders in the field of technology. The project has matched the girls with female mentors, who provide guidance as the girls develop their technical and leadership skills. In early July, the 14 finalists completed a two-week intensive training program in Web design and leadership skills in Tashkent, culminating in the creation of their own websites. Since then the participants have returned home and started applying their new knowledge in their local communities. They have been using their summer vacation to begin a series of trainings on developing computer skills, leadership qualities, and Web design.



Namangan's Tech Age Girls after a successful training session

Nelly Mingalieva, a ninth-grade student at **Termez School No. 10**, has been leading a wide spectrum of activities for her community. On July 12, she began training five students of the seventh through ninth grades on the foundations of computer literacy, where students learned about modern opportunities for women with computer skills. Using her mentors as examples, she taught the girls about the concept of a woman leader and her place in modern society. Through her web site (<http://techage-girls.connect.uz/nmingalieva/women-lider>) Mingalieva helped to acquaint the girls with her personal experience on how to play a leadership role in public life. "I really like how Nelly conducts trainings, how she easily interacts with a computer and creates sites. I would like not only to learn how to do it, but also to help her with any future activities," said seventh-grader **Maya Mukaeva**. "Earlier I thought that only adult men could create sites, but today I saw that it is also possible for girls. One only needs to possess a little diligence and desire." Mingalieva, together with Educational Internet Center (EIC) volunteer **Ilkhom Baymuratov**, started a new club, "Girl Leaders", dedicated to training the girls of the school in computer literacy and using the various resources of the EIC. She hopes that these girls can then lead other trainings for their peers and continue informing girls on this theme.



Aziza Mirsalimova helps a forum participant

From July 25 to July 30, **Aziza Mirsalimova** and **Gulmira Yergasheva**, students at **Andijan School No. 2**, have conducted six training sessions on the role of women in society. These sessions have given 15 girls, ages 14-18, an in-depth understanding of the Tech Age Girls project and further knowledge of female leadership, website creation, and project participation. This training has expanded into the formation of a new **"Internet Girls Club"**. In September the girls plan to shoot two short films entitled "The Rights of Women" and "The Rights of Children". They feel that these films could become an excellent resource in carrying out future trainings about women in society.

In late July three participants from the Karakalpakstan region - **Nastya Buchok, Nukus School No. 32, Anna Vaganyan, Nukus Gymnasium No. 1, and Gaisha Hakimniyazova, Halkabad School No. 19,** - finished developing an activity plan for their group “**Be a Leader!**”. They started a bulletin board in the corner of the EIC where they present information about the project, posters and a schedule of activities. On August 5, Buchok trained seven students about the purpose of the Tech Age Girls project, introducing them to the project site (<http://techage-girls.connect.uz/site>) and her personal site (<http://techage-girls.connect.uz/nbuchok>). On August 7, Vaganyan led a session on leadership roles for four students at Nukus School No. 11, explaining the advantages of having skills in Web design and the role volunteering can play in solving societal problems.

Since returning from the Tashkent camp, Karshi participants **Emma Tovmasyan, School No. 15, Shohida Shukurova, School No. 34, and Consuela Turaeva, Academic Lyceum "Nuristan",** have been engaged in the registration and development of the “**Center for the Comprehensive Development of Girls**”. After finding a home at the EIC in **School No. 34,** they organized a group of 12 girls for a training session. In the second half of August the Center plans to train students in computer literacy, the Internet, Web design, leadership, children’s rights, and methods of overcoming gender inequalities. By the end of 2005 they plan to train 30-35 girls from the schools and lyceums of Karshi.

The three participants from **Namangan School No. 48: Najiya Khazivalieva, Camilla Azizova, and Svetlana Konchenko,** have also stayed very busy since their return. Azizova prepared visual aids, handouts, and other resources for a training on different Web design and imagery software. Konchenko organized a number of training activities for the ninth through eleventh grades, among those a quiz “How well do I know the computer?”, a debate entitled “Leadership – A Man’s Affair”, and a competition on “Leadership Qualities”. Khazivalieva held a series of discussions focusing on ways to motivate female participation in projects and the qualities necessary for women leaders. She has also coordinated her efforts with the Namangan regional Red Cross/Red Crescent. She will be carrying out computer classes at their facility and has started a grant to improve their conference hall. Khazivalieva has updated her personal website (<http://techage-girls.connect.uz/nkhazivalieva>) with the results of her work.

As a result of their participation in the project, the girls have gained useful technical knowledge, developed their leadership skills, and have started to pass those skills on to others. At the same time they have become more confident, resourceful, and active in their communities. IREX congratulates all the participants of Tech Age Girls on their achievements this summer and looks forward to their many future successes.

NUKUS PARTICIPANT LINKS UZBEKISTAN AND THE UNITED STATES



During the past year, Global Connections has had several of its participants selected to participate in the highly competitive academic programs offered by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the US Department of State (see <http://www.irex.org/programs/connectivity/news/2005/0615.asp#3>). On August 12, one day before leaving for the US, **Eleonora Ibragimova,** program participant and **2005 FLEX program winner** from **Nukus school No. 33,** paid a visit to the school’s Educational Internet Center to say good-bye to school representatives and to complete her work on her personal web page “Eleonora’s Presentations & Photos” (<http://nukus1.connect.uz/flex>). Once she arrives in Bellevue, Washington, Ibragimova plans to use it as part of a cultural presentation on her homeland. In addition to pictures the site contains two presentations: one about Karakalpakstan’s environment, made as a result of her participation in various Global

Connection projects (i.e. **Global Youth Service Day, Earth Day, Doors to Diplomacy,** etc); and the other about her school, community, and the location of her home town, made as part of an iEARN joint project with an Italian school. Since one of the main goals of the FLEX program is to promote cultural cooperation and mutual understanding between nations, Ibragimova took a teddy bear with her, given to her by a group of eighth-ninth grade students, who want to make a connection with the US and learn more about everyday life there. Now the potential participants of the iEARN “**Teddy Bear**” project expect him to inform them about the United States and create a bridge between Uzbekistan and the United States. “I am sure my participation in the Global Connections project does not stop today,” said Ibragimova. “My participation in the program will only begin in the United States, as I have a great responsibility to my school friends now to tell, together with Teddy Bear, about our school, friends, community, and culture in general.” Global Connections and Exchange wishes Ibragimova continued success in bringing Uzbekistan and the United States closer during her adventure in America.

CHILDREN'S MEDIA CENTER PUTS SPOTLIGHT ON STUDENT JOURNALISTS



On August 1-5, 16 students from the regions of Ferghana, Andijan, and Namangan took part in the “**Children about Children in Media**” **summer camp** organized by “**Yangi Avlod**” (New Generation) Media Center in collaboration with **UNICEF**. Seven out of the 16 attendees have been active participants of the Global Connection and Exchange – Uzbekistan program. During the seminar, all participants attended specialized sessions, taking part in thematic contests and quizzes conducted by Sunnatillo Kuziev, Media Center director, Nargiz Kosimova, Journalism instructor from Tashkent State University, and Ulugbek Giyosov, representative of “Yoshlar” (The Youth) Uzbek national TV channel. These experts taught the participants about interviewing, reporting, videotaping and video editing. One day of the seminar was held in the Educational Internet Center (EIC) of **Tashlak School No. 11**, where the children were introduced to the basics of Internet journalism, and studied the websites of the Media Center (<http://yangiavlod.uz/backup/index.htm>) and UNICEF (<http://www.unicef.org/uzbekistan>).

Dilshoda Rasulova, a tenth grader at **Margilan School No. 9** and EIC volunteer, said: “I dreamed about participating in this type of training program. We wanted to issue a school newspaper a long time ago but did not have enough skill in composing articles.” Rasulova has combined her new journalism skills with the knowledge she gained through various Global Connections projects, and intends to publish the first issue of the “Ishonch” school newspaper in September.

As a result of the summer camp, the participants produced one radio program, two video reports, and ten one-minute documentaries. Rasulova created a documentary entitled “Parting” about the feelings children experience when they are separated from their family. **Lola Yuldasheva** from Tashlak made a video on the importance of taking care of the environment, and **Yaroslav Ovcharenko** from Ferghana made a documentary about the dangers of smoking. **Shoyadbek Abdurasulov**, community representative of the EIC at **Bulakbashi Specialized Boarding School No. 43**, who attends Bulakbashi School No. 4, created a film entitled “Cheap Labor” using specialized video software. “I think the documentaries we made will help many children to recognize their rights!” he said. “My future plans include conducting student training at the EIC in order to teach them to produce films about ecological problems and their possible solutions.” For now Abdurasulov is preparing to conduct his first training and creating a film entitled “Take Care of Mother Nature”, which he then plans to post on the school’s official website.



Participants at the Media Center summer camp

All video materials created during the seminar were submitted by the event organizers for participation in the International Festival of Young Journalists to be held in Tashkent in November 2005. Currently all articles produced at the seminar are being published in the national press, including the newspapers “Turkestan”, “Klass” (Classroom), “Molodyoj Uzbekistana” (Youth of Uzbekistan); and “Gulhan” (Flame) and “Yangi Avlod” (New Generation) magazines. The “Children about Children in Media” summer camp provided a valuable opportunity for students to learn about the importance of effective journalism and to help them become more active citizens.

KARSHI SCHOOL PLANS FOR INTERNET CENTER SUSTAINABILITY



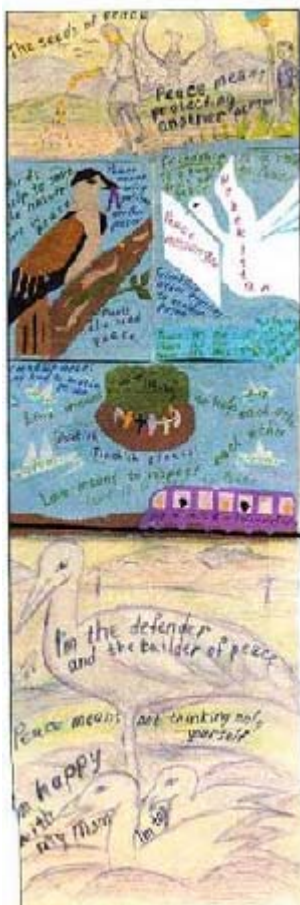
Meeting of School No. 93's Parent Committee

Since January 2005, Global Connection schools have been dedicated to the sustainability of their Educational Internet Center (EIC) by engaging parent committees in community outreach and tapping the resources of local volunteers. **Shakhrisabz School No. 93** has been particularly successful with these activities. On August 4, the school discussed the results of the parent committee’s fundraising activities, as well as its plans for upcoming school year. At the meeting, which included school administration representatives, teachers, parent committee members and the school’s Web club members, school director **Tulaev Ilhom Hodjaevich** reported that over the past year the school hosted a wide range of fundraising activities, including school dances, comedy shows, and athletics contests, raising over 200 dollars. As a result, they were able to obtain a new scanner, mouse, active speakers and other necessary computer accessories for the EIC (<http://shakhrisabz93.connect.uz/fond.html>).

When the discussion turned to possible ideas for the upcoming school year, the Web club members noted that they have started developing the club's official website "Oho-ho". "In this site we decided to reflect the students' school life, news and innovations in Web design, as well as the Web design activities and trainings that we will conduct to increase a number of Web designers at our school and in city as a whole," says club member **Shavkat Mukhtarov**. "And, undoubtedly, we will continue to work regularly on updating and enriching the content of our school website." In addition, the Web club members offered to provide a new service during next year – to produce personal websites for individuals and organizations. This will help to strengthen the EIC's bond with the community while raising funds for its maintenance.

The school also focused on the important role volunteers played in sustaining the EIC, specifically mentioning **Rustam Norbekov**, EIC visitor and parent committee chairman. Norbekov has taken an active part in remodeling the EIC and renovating the school in general. As a representative of the Kitab Astronomical Institute of the Uzbek Academy of Science, he helped students to participate and win an honorable mention in the "Live Map" international project, as well as to create a community website about the local observatory (<http://shakhrisabz93.connect.uz/shstancia/index.htm>). His help, along with the increased participation of other parents, teachers and students, will ensure that School No. 93's EIC is sustainable in the years to come.

USE OF TECHNOLOGY BRINGS ANDIJAN SCHOOL INTERNATIONAL SUCCESS



"The Seeds of Peace"

Since the program's beginning, Global Connections has encouraged teachers to use their newly developed technological skills to seek out international projects for their students. Exemplary in this case is **Kimyohon Yusupova**, an English language teacher and TEA program alumna from **Jalaquduk School No. 25** in Andijan. On August 22, she learned that her school had been chosen as a recipient of the **People to People International (PTPI) 2005 Community Service Project Award**, their second award in the last year.

When Yusupova found out about it, she said, "When I was in the states [in 2003], I was always surprised at how comfortable the kids were with computers, and frankly speaking, I wanted our students to be just as comfortable. This award is such a shock to me because I would never have imagined that our students could adjust so quickly to this technology, and in one year get their second prize for an international project..."

It all began in August 2004, when she learned of the new Educational Internet Center (EIC) opening in Global Connections participant **School No. 2** in Andijan. After hearing of the opportunities the center provides to community members, she registered and joined a listserv for alumni of US government exchange programs (<https://alumni.state.gov>), and discovered many ways to cooperate with US schools, particularly through PTPI and its educational programs. In September 2004, they started participating in the "Global Youth Art Murals" project.

In order to establish and develop a partnership with a school abroad, Yusupova needed her students to learn how to use computers. She registered a group for a series of training programs at the EIC of School No. 2, and by mid-November her students completed the program's standardized course on computer literacy and the Internet. During their visits to the EIC, the students put into practice their artistic skills and created pictures on the topic "Peace, Friendship and Mutual Understanding", eventually creating the winning mural "The Seeds of Peace". This victory motivated them to new activities and in February 2005, they began participation in the PTPI Community Service Project (http://www.ptpi.org/programs/school_class_proj_award.jsp). As part of this

project, they helped the community's elderly, cleaned up and restored the yard of a local kindergarten, and organized a clothing drive for Indonesian children who suffered in the tsunami. Their efforts have earned them an invitation to this year's **"Global Youth Forum" in Washington, DC**.

Global Connections is excited to see teachers and students seeking out new computer skills at local EICs and employing them internationally. We are proud of the achievements School No. 25 gained through using new technology and wish them future success in their endeavors.

MUTUAL COOPERATION BENEFITS INTERNET CENTER AND LOCAL NGOS

Through Global Connection's Educational Internet Centers (EICs), previously marginalized sectors of the community have gained access to the many opportunities available through computers and the Internet. On August 18, **Nurillo Khudoynazarov**, Regional Educator for the Kashkadarya Region, used the EIC of **Karshi School No. 34** to conduct a training session with the directors of two local NGOs on searching the Internet for grants. Gulshan Khudoyerova, director of NGO "Soglom Asr" (Healthy Generation) and Zamira Ismailova, head of NGO "Lider" (Leader), both needed funding for the continuation of their NGOs activities. "Soglom Asr" aim is to encourage the youth of Karshi to shape healthier attitudes and visions of the world, increase legal literacy, prevent drug-abuse, and increase knowledge about HIV/AIDS. "Lider" provides psychological, medical and legal support to local women. As a result, the training participants discovered a large number of grant programs for their NGOs and have applied to a UN-run program, Fund to End Violence against Women, (http://www.unifem.org/gender_issues/violence_against_women/trust_fund_guidelines.php). Visiting the EIC throughout August, many local NGO representatives have been introduced to the activities of the Karshi EIC and have made strong connections with its members. As a result, they have decided to increase cooperation with both the center and the school. They are currently planning to conduct training sessions for school students and teachers in order to increase their awareness of the world-wide problems affecting children. They have scheduled a training session for September 3, for 12 teachers from School No. 34 about the prevention of drug-abuse among children. "As we have found, according to Regional Narcological Clinic of Kashkadarya and the HIV/AIDS Crisis Center of the Kashkadarya Region, the number of drug addicts in our region has tripled since 2003," said Khudoyerova. Khudoyerova and Ismailova have also decided to start scheduling activities to assist the "Tech Age Girls" project participants with trainings on leadership.



Nurillo Khudoynazarov helps an EIC member

The participation of well-known local organizations in School No.34 EIC activities is an example of how successful cooperation between a Global Connections school and local professionals can benefit the wider community.



ANNOUNCEMENT

Global Connections and Exchange – Uzbekistan Celebrates CONSTITUTION DAY

In honor of **Constitution Day** on **September 17**, Global Connections will be offering several activities open to schools in both Uzbekistan and the United States:

September 12- 16: Global Connections will conduct an online forum for students to begin engaging in conversation about their constitutions - what do they know about it, what would they like to learn, etc. The forum site is at: <http://www.connectuz.net/index.php?showforum=48>

September 17 - 21: the forum site will have questions posted about both countries' constitutions. Text of these constitutions can be found at:

U.S. Constitution: <http://www.archives.gov/national--archives--experience/charters/constitution.html>

UZ constitution: <http://www.uta.edu/cpsees/UZBEKCON.htm>

Friday, September 23 - there will be an **live online quiz** open to everyone - and students who answer the most questions accurately will receive a prize. The online quiz will require the use of Yahoo Messenger. The quiz will start *promptly* at **8:30 am EST**.

If you would like your class to participate in some or all of the above activities, please contact Cheyrl MacLean at cmaclean@irex.org or at 202-628-8188 x 176.

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